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MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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INFORMATION

November 20, 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR GENERAL HAIG

FROM: Arthur T. Downey

SUBJECT: Soviet Properties and the Moon Treaty

You wished to have some information on both these items.

1. A Soviet Draft Treaty on the Moon.

The Soviets have tabled a draft treaty at the UN which has now apparently been delegated for study to the Legal Sub-committee of the UN's Outer Space Committee. The draft covers points which are already satisfactorily treated in the UN's Convention on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which has been in force for a couple of years. The new Soviet draft, therefore, is generally of the "motherhood" variety in that its provisions break no new ground and are generally considered meaningless or superfluous.

The principal points of the draft treaty relate to its declaration that (a) the moon shall be a international demilitarized area and (b) that the moon is not subject to national claims of sovereignty. Our substantive concerns with respect to the Soviet draft are really very minor. For example, there is a possibility that the treaty provisions would prohibit us from asserting ownership of material which we have brought back from the moon, and there is some question whether our activities on the moon might be too restricted. In our discussions with the Soviets and in our actions at the UN, we have not in any way attempted to block consideration of the draft, though we have indicated to the Soviets that we are not enthusiastic about it.

The question arises as to why the Soviets are pushing this treaty draft, and seeking our active support of it. The best guesses are:

-- the draft may have appeared on a Soviet intragovernmental list of possible initiatives and, in the absence of good reasons opposing it, has acquired a life of its own;

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-- mutual cooperation with respect to the draft would provide further evidence that the US and the USSR can cooperate effectively in certain fields;

-- it is possible that the Soviets desired to add a little glamour to their performance at the UNGA this session (the anticipation of the arrival in New York of the PRC delegation might also have been a factor).

My own feeling is that we should not be bullied into actively supporting their draft. It is meaningless at best, and potentially restrictive at worst. Our joint cooperation on such a treaty would smack too much of a transparent effort to grab at anything to evidence our cooperative efforts. It would be much better if we continued to show our cooperation in the space area in the hardware field, such as the docking arrangements on which we are working.

2. Soviet Properties.

Early in November, the Soviets advised State that they were looking at six properties in the Washington area as "recreation" sites. Evidently, none of the sites are intended for the Ambassador's official residence, but it is generally assumed that he would use the site as an alternate residence and perhaps for entertainment purposes. The Soviets asked for some informal indication of how the USG would react to these sites. The properties were:

- (a) Germantown, Md.
- (b) Oakcrest Estate, 1101 Crest Lane, McLean, Virginia
- (c) Riverview, Md.
- (d) Centerville, Md. (a large estate, 1600 acres)
- (e) Belmont Bay, Virginia (no specific property noted)
- (f) River Road, Montgomery County, Md. (the former Drew Pearson estate).

State began a check of these properties with the interested agencies. The AEC flatly opposed the Germantown site, and the CIA was negative on the Oakcrest property (which is only one half mile from the CIA headquarters).

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The Soviets were advised on Friday that it would be extremely difficult to secure approval for either of these two properties. In the meantime, the Soviets told State that they were no longer interested in the Drew Pearson estate. Therefore, at the moment, the Soviets are still looking at (c), (d) and (e), with their particular interest in (e).

When State informed the Soviets about the two negative sites, the Soviets expressed no particular concern (though they noted that the Ambassador personally was interested in the Oakcrest estate). In fact when the Soviets initially presented their list of six, State suggested that the Germantown site would probably present difficulties, and the very close proximity of the Oakcrest estate to the CIA made that sort of a non-starter too.

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